6:Ireland S-5 (no date)1937 MH1 Iraq MH1

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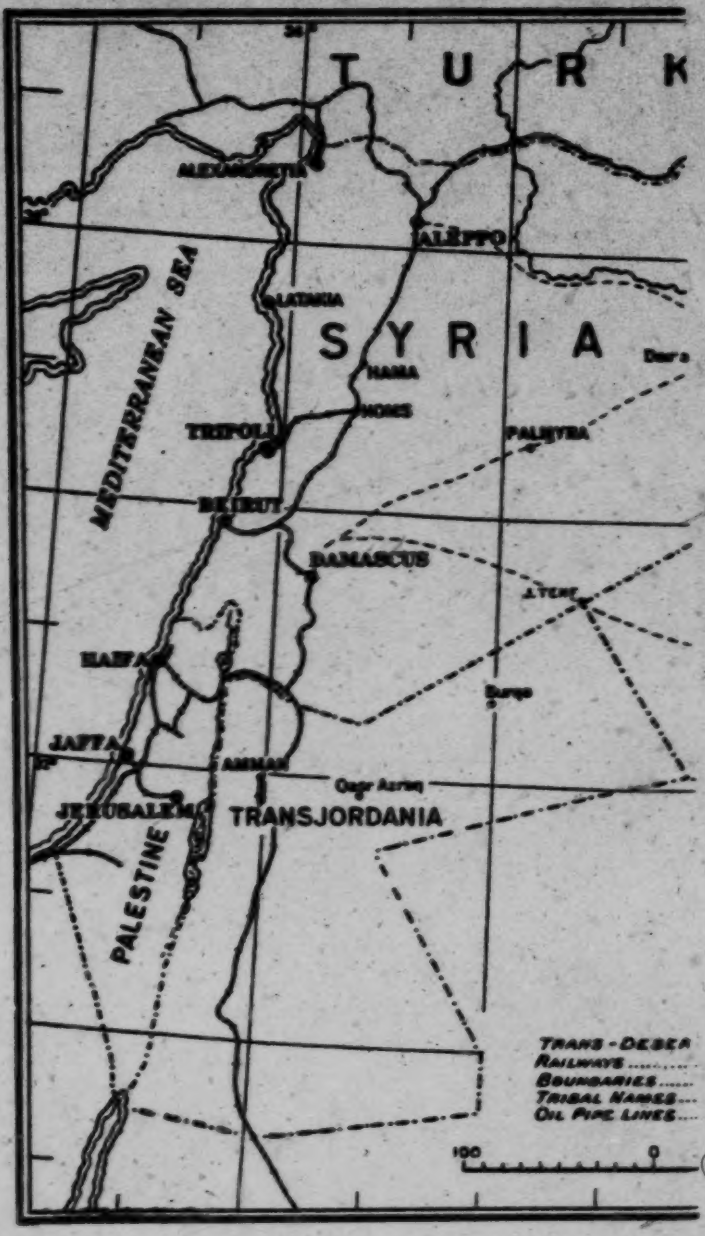

[following p. 96(a)]

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[following p. 96(b)]

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[Spelbring P. 96(c)]

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Iraq MH1

basis of the Iraqi State Railways, which were made over to the civil authorities set up by the British Government in 1920, and in 1923 to the newly-formed Government of Iraq. They became the property of the Iraq Government on 1 April 1946. They consist at present of two gauges. A metre-gauge line runs from the Port of Basra to Baghdad, and thence across the River Tigris by the new bridge to Kirkuk and Arbil. This line has branches from Shuaiba Junction to Shuaiba, Zubair, and Jebel Sanam Quarry, from Ur Junction to Nasiriya and from Jalula Junction to Khanaqin. A standard-gauge line connects Baghdad to Tel Kochek on the Syrian frontier. A through rail service with air-conditioned coaches on the section Basra to Baghdad connects with the Taurus express from Baghdad via Mosul to Istanbul and thence to continental Europe and Great Britain. The through standard-gauge connexion from Baghdad to Tel Kochek was opened for traffic on 15 July 1940. An extension of the metre-gauge main line from Kirkuk to Arbil was opened to traffic on 6 June 1949. There is a total of 1,050 miles open, of which 328 miles are standard (4 ft 8½ in.) gauge and 722 miles metre gauge. 496

For the year ending 31 March 1951 the total receipts were ID3,870,174, total expenditure ID3,816,974, number of passengers carried 3,809,412, goods 1,890,413 tons. 497

Roads. At the end of 1948 Iraq contained some 1,400 miles of surfaced metalled roads, 250 miles of unsurfaced metalled roads, and 5,000 miles of earth roads. Most of the metalled roads are in the immediate vicinity of Baghdad, between Baghdad and the east and north, and in the north. Elsewhere their lack is due mainly to the absence of suitable road material and the expense of bringing it to the site. The earth roads which take their place, especially in the southern plains, are levelled and where necessary embanked and bridged but are vulnerable to the rains. Their defects are to some extent offset by the flatness of the construction and repair. 491

The main transport routes are: Baghdad to Mosul via Samarra; Baghdad to Mosul via Kirkuk and Irbil; Kirkuk to Sulaimania and Halabja; Irbil to Rowanduz from north-west Persia; Mosul to Amadiya; Mosul to Zakho; Mosul to Tel Kochek for north-east Syria and Turkey; Baghdad to Khanaqin for Persia; Baghdad to Basra via Kut and Amara; Baghdad to Basra via Hilla and Samawa; Baghdad to Kerbela; Baghdad to Rutba for Syria and Jordan.

In 1950 a governmental committee drew up a ten-year programme which provided for the construction or improvement of some 2,150 miles of road. First priority was accorded to

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433 Iraq each capable of manufacturing 10,000 tons of sugar per annum from sugar beet to be grown locally, a bitumen plant, and a small steel plant. In addition the Government is investigating the recommendation of the International Bank mission[1] for the erection of a chemical plant at Kirkuk to produce ammonium sulphate fertilizer, cement, sulphur, and carbon black. The mission has also recommended plants for manufacturing bone-meal fertilizer, date-packing crates and motor-car tyres, and for batching concrete, converting steel scrap into building components, and possibly for remelting glass.

Labour

466 647 657 Conditions of work and employment are regulated by a Labour Law (1936–46), which so far relates only to 'workmen' (a term requiring more precise definition) in industrial undertakings. It is in process of revision and extension. Its application is supervised by the Department of Labour and Social Security, which maintains a small corps of inspectors. This department, advised by foreign experts, proposes to experiment with employment exchanges, is starting to compile labour statistics, is undertaking a programme of housing for labour, and is examining plans of social security, for which the existing Labour Law already contains some provision in the form of indemnities on discharge, paid sick and confinement leave, and compensation for injuries. Safety and sanitary working conditions are covered generally by the Labour Law and made obligatory in greater detail by a Workshops and Factories Regulation (1937). In January 1953 it was stated that new provisions, for eventual inclusion in the new Labour Law, had been drafted for establishing wage boards, regulating disputes, and determining the rights, obligations, and administration of trade unions, which are not clearly defined in the existing Labour Law. The latter grants industrial workers the right to establish associations to safeguard their special interests, strengthen the spirit of co-operation, effect educational, cultural, hygienic, social, and [467] moral improvements, and develop Iraqi industry. A few trade unions exist; their membership is small and activity slight. Others have been suspended for subversive activity. The movement is still rudimentary.

Communications

496 *Railways.*[2] The railways constructed by the British forces during the Mesopotamian Campaign eventually formed the

[1] See above, p. 275.

[2] This section is based on the *Directory of Railway Officials and Year Book*, 1952-3.